

Gainesville Fire Rescue agrees with NFPA (national fire protection association) and discourages the use of LP gas fired outdoor turkey fryers for deep frying.

How to Deep Fry Your Turkey Safely

Turkey is often a main focus of Thanksgiving. While some like it baked, and others prefer smoked, many families chose to fry theirs. To help you avoid home fires and burn injuries this Thanksgiving, please follow these important safety tips if you choose to use a turkey fryer.

What You Need

In addition to a turkey (no more than 15 pounds), you'll need turkey frying hardware with a thermometer, plus a propane gas tank and burner, a meat thermometer and oil. Use oils that have a high smoke point, such as corn, peanut or canola oils. Keep a fire extinguisher and plenty of heavy duty pot holders nearby.

Where to Fry

Because oil is flammable, you should never fry a turkey indoors. Place the fryer, outdoors, on a level dirt or grassy area a safe distance from buildings. Never fry on wood decks, which could catch fire, or in a garage. You will also want to avoid concrete surfaces, unless you don't mind oil stains. Always keep a fire extinguisher nearby.

Before You Fry

Determine the amount of oil you will need by placing the turkey in the basket (or on the hanger, depending on the type of fryer you are using) and putting this in the pot. Add water until it reaches about two inches above the turkey. Remove the turkey and note the water level by using a ruler to measure the distance from the top of the pot to the surface of the water. Remove the water and thoroughly dry the pot.

How to Fry

Heat the oil to about 325°F and no higher than 350°F. This usually takes between 20 to 30 minutes. Once the oil is hot enough, place the turkey in the basket or on the turkey hanger (follow instructions that came with your turkey frying kit) and slowly lower it into the pot. To avoid oil spillover and splashing, do not overfill your fryer and be extremely careful when lowering your turkey into the pot.

Use well-insulated potholders or oven mitts when touching pot or lid handles and wear safety goggles to protect your eyes from oil splatter.

With whole turkeys, you can estimate on about three minutes per pound to cook. Remove turkey and check the temperature with meat thermometer. The temperature should reach 170° F. in the breast and 180° F. in the thigh.

Never leave the fryer unattended. Some units do not have thermostat controls, so you must watch the fryer carefully to keep an eye on the oil temperature. Remember that the oil will continue to heat until it catches fire.

Keep children and pets away from the fryer when in use. Even after use, bear in mind that the oil inside the cooking pot can remain dangerously hot for hours after use.

Never use water to extinguish oil or grease fires and immediately call 9-1-1 for help if a fire or burn should occur.

Safety Tips-

- Always fry outdoors, well away from all buildings
- Select a location that provides flat, noncombustible footing
- The fuel tank should be as far as possible from the burner
- Be sure the turkey is fully thawed and dry
- Be prepared to react if a fire occurs
- Have a Multipurpose Dry Chemical Fire Extinguisher
- If it can be safely done, turn of the fuel tank
- Do not overfill the pot with oil and use a smaller than usual turkey
- Never leave the fryer unattended and keep children and pets well away
- Temporarily turn off the burner before lowering the turkey into the oil
- Never attempt to move a burner or pot full of hot oil

For more information on safely frying your turkey, contact Assistant Chief Stephen Hesson at 352-334-5078.

